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Protect Your Vision

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[NO COMMENTS]

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U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Kevin Brau, Combat Logistics Battalion 26, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), loads his M9 service pistol during a pistol qualification on the flight deck of the USS Kearsarge (LHD 3), at sea. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Kyle N. Runnels/ Released)

On or off duty, we have routines to protect ourselves – do you park in a safe location? Did you put on sunscreen to prevent sunburn? Did you use the shoe inserts to protect your feet while running? Likely, you answered yes to those questions, but did you remember to protect your eyes?

In observance of *Save your Vision Month*, the [Vision Center of Excellence](#) wants you protected to prevent unnecessary eye disease and injuries. Here are a few ways you can protect your vision:

Shields Save Sight: Serious combat eye trauma is one of the most common injuries in combat, resulting in major injury and blindness. Using protective eyewear or goggles, especially those listed on the Authorized Protective Eyewear List ([APEL](#)), protect your eyes from any number of things that can injure or blind you. Proactively wearing eye APEL protection gear creates a barrier between the eyes and flying items. In theater and even in training, you may worry about shrapnel, ballistic fragmentations or debris, but at home the same type of injuries occur quite frequently while hammering, using power tools, doing mechanical or yard work. **Any eye injury** can cause temporary or permanent vision loss impacting your quality of life or job performance, so take the time to use the proper eyewear for the task at hand. Also, considering eyewear costs approximately \$80 and can prevent 90% of eye injuries, isn't it worth the time and small investment for a lifetime of sight?

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February 2015 (7)
January 2015 (12)
December 2014 (17)
November 2014 (11)

Reducing the strain placed on eyes by smart phones, computers, and other screens: Today, our lives revolve around screens, we wake up and use our cellphones to check the time, go to the office where we use a computer or a smart phone to send emails or keep in touch with co-workers, use our GPS to direct us to a new location and read books on tablets before we go to bed or read a recipe for dinner. Our lives revolve around screens. To reduce the strain on your eyes the [Vision Center of Excellence](#) recommends following the 20/20/20 rule. Every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds. Easy as that!

Routine Eye Exams: Some eye diseases have no detectable symptoms early on, so getting a regular eye exam is vital for preventative health care. Early diagnosis and, if necessary, treatment of eye issues helps protect good vision health and prevents vision loss. Additionally, regular eye exams can also help doctors detect other chronic illnesses such as hypertension and diabetes.

Taking a few minutes to schedule an eye exam, 20 seconds to look away from the screen, and a few seconds to put the right eye protection on can save you from dealing with eye injuries that may impact your life. For more information on being eye smart, visit the [Vision Center of Excellence](#) website or connect with us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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September 2014 (20)
August 2014 (14)
July 2014 (13)
June 2014 (8)
May 2014 (11)
April 2014 (9)
March 2014 (14)
February 2014 (7)
January 2014 (7)
December 2013 (7)
November 2013 (12)
October 2013 (7)
September 2013 (14)
August 2013 (13)
July 2013 (11)
June 2013 (22)
May 2013 (15)
April 2013 (14)
March 2013 (14)
February 2013 (14)
January 2013 (12)
December 2012 (11)
November 2012 (11)
October 2012 (7)
September 2012 (9)
August 2012 (12)
July 2012 (13)
June 2012 (17)
May 2012 (22)
April 2012 (14)
March 2012 (13)
February 2012 (14)
January 2012 (13)
December 2011 (13)
November 2011 (20)
October 2011 (22)
September 2011 (12)
August 2011 (16)